



THE COLLEGE SEARCH: Finding The Right Fit

College&CareerPathways2019

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VSAC PLANNING FOR COLLEGE

College comparison chart

As you investigate colleges, use this worksheet to keep track of schools or which you're most interested and to compare them to you with list of ideal characteristics. In the second column, list all 15 items in order of importance to you — 1 for most important, 12 for least important.


Factors to consider	my factor rank (1-12)	my wish list of college characteristics	college name	college name	college name
Type/technical degree plan, college/university					
Major/academic program					
Size of school					
Location (local/nearhome/abroad)					
Cost/affordability					
Academic atmosphere					
Student life/activities					
Diversity of student population					
Facilities/library/theater, cafeteria/sports					
Cost/degree budget and affordability					
Other					

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Types of postsecondary education

- Length — certificate, 2-year, or 4-year?
- University?
- Specialized or general?
- Online or physical location?



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Majors/academic programs

- What do I want to learn?
- What subjects interest me?
- What do I hope to do?
- What if I have no idea?



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Types of postsecondary education

- What size student body, campus, and classes are right for me?
- Do I want to stay close to home or go farther away?
- City, rural, or suburban?



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Academic selectivity

- What chance do I have of getting in? Are there special program requirements?
- What range of selectivity should I consider, especially for an academic scholarship or merit aid?



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Campus atmosphere

- What type of "personality" does the campus have?
- How many students live on campus?
- What are the academic expectations?
- Coed, single gender? Religious? Military?
- What sorts of supports are available to students?

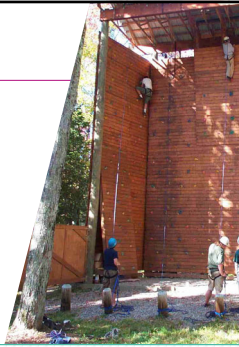


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Student life & diversity

- What housing and meal options are available?
- How diverse is the student body?
- What opportunities and activities are available?
- How do students spend their time?



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Outcomes information

- How many first-year students return for their sophomore year?
- How many students graduate within 4 or 5 years?
- What are graduate school admission & job placement rates?



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Cost & affordability

- What is the sticker price vs. actual cost?
- What are average debt and repayment rates?
- Know your starting point: EFC Calculator www.vvac.org/resources/efc-calculator
- Know the college's starting point: Net Price Calculator www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/
- As with selectivity, consider applying to financial safety, match, and reach schools.

College Hunch
A mobile app that lets you compare colleges' key stats, including net price.

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Wisdom to take with you

- Be open to all kinds of options.
- Your goals and preferences may change.
- Know your strengths and weaknesses.
- Do not take admission decisions personally!
- *Be organized and follow through.*



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